

Message Text

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73

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

IO-11 DLOS-04 SAL-01 OFA-01 /074 W

----- 063884

R 281112Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7453

INFO AMCONGEN HONG KONG

AMCONSUL UDORN

AMEMBASSYVIENTIANE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BANGKOK 1893

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, LA, TH

SUBJ: LAO OFFICIAL DEPARTS BANGKOK LESS THAN HAPPY AFTER THAI
PROTEST JANUARY 24 INCIDENT ON MEKONG.

REF: BANGKOK 1685

1. PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR VIENTIANE JANUARY 28, LAO
DEPUTY MINISTER OF INFORMATION, CULTURE AND TOURISM OUNHEUAN
PHOUNSAVAT TOLD PRESS THAT FOREIGN MINISTER CHATCHAI CHUNHAWAN
SUMMONED HIM THIS MORNING TO PRESENT AIDE-MEMOIRE PROTESTING
FISHING BOAT INCIDENT ON MEKONG JANUARY 24 (REFTEL. OUNHEUAN
COMPLAINED THAT SUCH GOOD FEELING EXISTED AS RESULT OF DANCE
FESTIVAL THAT CHATCHAI OUGHT NOT TO HAVE RAISED ISSUE, WHICH
ONLY HARMED RELATIONS. OUNHEUAN SAID THAT HIS COUNTRY STILL
WANTS GOOD RELATIONS WITH THAILAND BUT NOTED THAT, IF
CHATCHAI VISITS VIENTIANE NEXT WEEK, RECEPTION MIGHT NOT BE
QUITE AS FRIENDLY AS HE WOULD EXPECT.

2. MFA PRESS SPOKESMAN NITSAI WETCHACHIWA SAID THAT CHATCHAI
CALLED IN OUNHEUAN TO INFORM HIM OF THE INCIDENT, BUT
OUNHEUAN DENIED THAT LAOS WAS RESPONSIBLE. THEY ALSO
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DISCUSSED THE POSSIBLE VISIT OF CHATCHAI TO VIENTIANE.

3. LAO CHARGE KATH DITHAVONG TOLD THE PRESS THAT THE RIVER AT THAT PHANOM IS TWO KILOMETERS WIDE--TOO WIDE FOR A SMALL WEAPON FIRED FROM THE LAO SIDE TO HIT A BOAT ON THE THAI SIDE. HE INDICATED THAT A THIRD PARTY MAY BE TRYING TO STIR THINGS UP BETWEEN LAOS AND THAILAND.

COMMENT: QUESTION OF WHETHER SMALL ARMS FIRE COULD HIT BOAT ON OTHER SIDE OF RIVER CLEARLY DEPENDS ON WEAPON USED AND PRECISE LOCATION OF BOAT--UNKNOWN AT THIS POINT. END COMMENT.)

4. COMMENT: THINGS HAVE DEFINITELY COOLED SOMEWHAT IN LAO-THAI RELATIONS WITH TODAY'S EXCHANGE OF WORDS. A SIGN OF HOW SERIOUSLY RELATHIONS ARE AFFECTED WILL BE SEEN IN THE PDRL'S RESPONSE TO CHATCHAI'S PROPOSAL TO VISIT VIENTIANE FOR MINISTERIAL-LEVEL TALKS ON FEBRUARY 3-4. WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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